

PRICE ONE PENNY.

Social-Democracy

AND

The Armed Nation.

WRITTEN FOR THE
SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC FEDERATION

BY
H. QUELCH.

"It is for you to urge upon all the necessity of placing yourselves in a position of an armed nation—a nation such as the Swiss, whose strength lies not in its numbers or in its military organisation, but in the spirit of those who love their country and are prepared to die for it."—LORD SALISBURY,
May 9, 1900.

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for the abolition of all standing armies and the establishment of a national citizen force. The latter portion of the proposal is perhaps better expressed by the phrase: The armed nation. For that is what we mean; every citizen armed, and trained to the use of arms. Not only do we regard universal disarmament, under present circumstances, as mere utopianism, a counsel of perfection; but we do not believe it would be the right course to adopt now, even if it could be carried out. We have to first eradicate the causes of conflict, the class antagonisms, and the material, economic bases of those antagonisms, before we can with advantage remove the effects, the results, the mere methods, developed by those causes. To-day the unarmed nation offers itself as a temptation and a prey to some mighty brigand power. Or, if she be too insignificant to attract the attention or excite the envy of a great military power she lies at the mercy of any gang of adventurers who may choose to arm against her. Who can doubt that it was the comparatively defenceless state of the Transvaal, relying upon the good faith of Great Britain and her Conventions, which tempted Jameson and his fellow-conspirators to that criminal raid, which has since been fruitful of such disastrous consequences? Even where there is no foreign enemy to fear, an unarmed people is necessarily at the mercy of a usurping clique, an oligarchy, or an autocrat. War is the last argument of kings, and all governments rest on force. So long as that is the case, it is only the people which is armed that can maintain its freedom, or can indeed, lay claim to be a free people. The first efforts of despots are directed to disarming the people. An armed nation may submit to despotism and suffer many abuses, but it at least has the means of resisting tyranny and asserting its freedom. An unarmed nation may be trampled under foot by a despot with the aid of a handful of mercenaries. The despot need not be either king or kaiser. We have already seen millionaire capitalists and capitalist corporations arm bodies of troops to shoot down rebellious blacks, and to dragoon their revolted white wage-slaves into subjection. We shall, doubtless, see more of this in future, as capitalism becomes more concentrated and capitalist combinations become more compact and formidable. A people without arms, trained only to tend machines, as mere factory "hands," will be absolutely at the mercy of organised, combined capital, with its bands of retainers, its police, and its "Pinkertons." Thus an unarmed nation cannot be free. A standing army, on the other hand, whether maintained under autocracy or under capitalism, for a reigning dynasty or a dominant class, is an instrument of tyranny and suppression, of aggression and spoliation. An armed nation, on the contrary, is a guarantee of individual liberty, of social freedom, and of national independence. So well, indeed, has this been understood in the past that the British propertied classes, while the monarch

ruled by "right divine," were strenuously opposed to a standing army. The Tory landlords in the House of Commons, as the history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries shows, strongly opposed this institution. Now, however, that the bourgeoisie is the dominant class it is forgotten that a standing army is contrary to the British constitution.

But it is claimed that here in England there is no need of conscription or of any form of compulsory service ; a reorganisation of our voluntary system is all that is necessary to give us all the forces we require for national defence or for any other military purpose, and, moreover, the experience of compulsory service in continental countries is such that all friends of popular freedom should oppose, not advocate, anything of the kind. As to the first objection, we are entirely opposed to the present so-called voluntary system, which provides our masters with bands of willing, if frequently involuntary, armed retainers. As a matter of fact, the more voluntary they are, the more dangerous are they. The present war in South Africa has shown us, among other things, that it is not difficult for the exploiting class to raise bands of voluntary mercenaries, ready and willing to sell themselves for their daily bread, to go and crush a people rightly struggling to be free. Those who would volunteer to crush liberty in the Transvaal would volunteer to perform the same vile task here at home. That is the danger of the so-called voluntary system, where the great majority of the people are unarmed and defenceless. With the whole nation armed there might be numbers willing to volunteer for foreign service, even for unjust wars of aggression, but they would not be a direct menace to the liberty of the people at home. As to the second point, we do not advocate the continental system of conscription. Our comrades in all countries where conscription obtains are engaged in vigorously fighting this evil, yet they are all at one with us in our advocacy of the armed nation. Some of our peace friends in this country are at pains to point out to us that in Germany, with its mighty army, its universal military service, we have a military despotism, not a free nation : and that, moreover, there is no more likelihood of an armed revolt, no more hope of the soldiers of the Kaiser refusing to act against the people in Germany than there is in this country. With regard to the latter point, however, that is by no means so certain. It is at any rate clear that a conscript army would not be more willing to act against the people than an army of volunteers. On the other hand, the universality of service would make the whole people better able to resist any act of militarist aggression, and where the whole of the men of a nation are trained to the use of arms, even under a system of conscription, a military despotism cannot exist except by the consent of the majority. If, therefore, we are to have militarism, it had better be the compulsory system of conscription than the voluntary system, which brings together,

arms, and trains, only those who are perfectly willing, for sheer love of fighting, or for any other reason, to be the tools of our masters. As against the voluntary system then, we should even prefer conscription. But we are far from advocating conscription or compulsory military service. We are opposed to conscription and to all forms of permanent military service. What we advocate is not compulsory military service, but a compulsory and universal military training. That is a totally different matter. Conscription, compulsory military service of any kind, is an evil. It involves the withdrawal of men from civil life, keeping them herded together in barracks, establishing them as a caste apart, as "soldiers," as distinct from civilians or citizens. Conscription, or any form of military service, means a standing army of men decivilised, removed from citizenship, in antagonism to the great body of the people, the citizens. The compulsory military training which we advocate carries with it the avoidance of all these evils. It means that every citizen shall be trained to act as a soldier at need, but that no one shall become merely a soldier or cease to be a citizen. It means that the flower of the nation shall not be withdrawn from civil life and made to waste some of the best years of its existence in the useless routine and pernicious atmosphere of a barracks. It means that no more of a man's lifetime shall be taken up by military duties than is absolutely necessary for the national defence, as it is only for that purpose that military service should be required. Thus by training every man to the use of arms, from his youth up, we should have, without the waste, the expense, the vice and demoralisation of the barracks—the armed nation, the real "army of a democracy."

It is not necessary that men should be divorced from civil life in order to make them capable of bearing arms and using them effectively against an enemy. In Switzerland, where we have the nearest approach to an armed democracy that is to be found, the recruits in the army service corps serve for 38 days in their first year, those in the ordnance corps 42 days, those in the infantry 45 days, those in the hospital corps 46 days, those in the engineers 50 days, those in the artillery 55 days, and those in the cavalry 80 days. In the aggregate, the terms of service, or training, amount for the infantryman, from his 20th to his 32nd year, to 119 days; a sergeant does 222 days, a lieutenant 440 days, an artillery captain serves till his 38th year and does 530 days altogether. This time is devoted to the actual work of military training and is not wasted in useless drill or idle showy parades which only serve to give a false importance and splendour to militarism, and to stimulate a spirit of jingoism and vainglory, but do nothing to actually equip men for the stern work of war, whose grim realities they but serve to disguise.*

* See articles by G. Moch in *Social-Democrat*, January, February, March, 1900.

It is generally pretended by the supporters of militarism that a citizen force is of little use in actual warfare; that for its successful prosecution the mechanical, the automatic soldier, the product of incessant drill and years of barrack life, is essential. To these it is nothing that over and over again in history we find that raw levies of badly-armed and half-trained civilians have defeated armies of professional soldiers. That the revolutionary armies of France, which beat back the overwhelming military forces of monarchical Europe, the men who won the War of Independence in America, the Garibaldians, even the larger proportion of the armies of the first Napoleon, had never had the training they deem essential to a soldier is of no importance to the upholders of a military caste. The events of history are of the past, circumstances are different to-day. It is urged that in the past almost everyone possessed an arm of some kind, and little skill was required to learn the art of manipulating the weapons, rude and simple compared with the highly-developed arms of precision of modern times. The very development of mechanical invention, which has led to specialisation in so many departments of industrial life, makes it necessary that the military art also should be specialised and that the soldier should be withdrawn from civil life and be practically excluded from its duties and its privileges, in order to devote himself wholly and solely to his calling. The advantage of such a military caste to the dominant class is, as we have seen, very clear, but it has not less clearly been demonstrated that for purely military purposes it is entirely unnecessary. If there is one fact which this war in South Africa has more strongly emphasised than any other it is that a well-armed citizen force, capably led, and accustomed to the use of the rifle, can, acting on the offensive-defensive, hold its own against an almost infinitely larger number of the finest troops in the world. If this war has taught us anything it is the soundness, even from a military—as distinct from a militarist—point of view, of the Socialist proposal of a national citizen force instead of a standing army. Of the Swiss system and of its efficiency as a fighting machine continental military experts have spoken in the highest terms of praise. General Brunet—a French officer of deservedly high reputation—said, after witnessing the Swiss manœuvres of 1896*: “Alone among European nations Switzerland has solved the problem we have all attempted in vain—to arm all its citizens and to make of each citizen a soldier, though not one single citizen is taken from his country.” The Swiss have never been called upon to demonstrate the efficiency of their system in actual warfare, and the only opportunity there has been of judging it has been that presented by the various mobilisations and manœuvres. On the other hand, it is very doubtful if the Boers would receive or even merit such high praise from military experts as have the Swiss;

* G. Moch, “Military Reform,” *Social-Democrat*, February 1900.

yet they have demonstrated in actual warfare that, with their possibly inferior organisation, they are a formidable fighting force, which no military power in the world could afford to despise. So far as can be judged, the Swiss would certainly not do worse than the Boers under similar circumstances. Every Swiss at 20 years of age, who is capable of the service, is then a recruit, and has to go up for training; and each succeeding year this training is repeated. In the meantime he has his rifle and kit always in his own possession; the result is that the mobilisation of any number of troops can be more speedily, more easily, and more cheaply effected in Switzerland than in any other country in Europe. G. Moch, in the articles already referred to, says: "In Switzerland every year half the *élite* (or active army) and a quarter of the landwehr (territorial) is mobilised; in France it has only happened once since 1871 that there was a 'trial' of mobilisation of two army corps (the tenth of the whole), and it was considered marvellous." In England we have seen in the past twelve months some of the difficulties, delays, and waste of time and money, involved in mobilising a comparatively small body of troops under our costly and cumbrous system. When the reserves were called out, for instance, it was no unusual thing for a man living at Glasgow, or even further south, to have to travel, say, to Aberdeen, there to join a detachment which would then be despatched to Southampton. If the man had had his arms and equipment there was no reason why he should not have travelled direct to Southampton, or at any rate have joined his contingent at some point on the route. As to the capabilities of the Swiss, as shown in these annual manoeuvres, there seems to be no reason to doubt that they are quite as good as any troops in Europe. G. Moch says that their work will compare favourably with that done by other armies; he gives an instance where the men marched for twelve days and manoeuvred five. This was done by two mountain batteries in mid-winter. They went up to 1,446 metres (more than 4,338 ft.), the snow being about 5 ft. deep, and the cold 20 deg. below freezing point. "In this dreadful weather the batteries marched 340 kilometres under perfect discipline; the horses were all in good condition. No battery in France or Germany could do better, and few could do so well. And none of these men were permanent soldiers, not one, from the major to the gunners; *all, the day before, were citizens, and on their first day they marched 42 kilometres.*"

It may be said that not only is any system of universal military training unnecessary in this country, seeing that we can easily raise sufficient voluntary soldiers for all necessary purposes, but that the Swiss system is not adapted to the conditions which exist here. The men of a nation which is mainly pastoral, like the Swiss, or one which is almost wholly agricultural, like the Boers, may be capable of being turned into fairly good soldiers with com-

paratively little training, and without being withdrawn from the ordinary avocations of their lives for any considerable period. But the circumstances are entirely different in the case of a nation which consists mainly of town-dwellers, like the English. It may be true that it is possible to raise by the voluntary system all the troops which this country may require for military purposes, although the uneasy rumours which are constantly being circulated as to the imminence of conscription, the frantic efforts which have been made in the present crisis to induce the time-expired men to rejoin, and the wild enthusiasm with which the volunteering of a few thousand men from Australia and Canada has been hailed seem to point to the contrary. But we do not advocate the establishment of a national citizen force simply as an alternative to conscription, or as a means of meeting any difficulty which may have arisen in finding sufficient men for the defence of the Empire. We advocate, as we always have advocated, the establishment of a national citizen force—the nation armed—as the only means of abolishing all standing armies, voluntary or conscript. That universal military training would come harder to a nation of town-dwellers than to a nation of shepherds or of agriculturists is certain. But that only shows the artificial and physically mischievous nature of modern town life; and a regular and compulsory military training, which would have the result of taking the young men of our towns more frequently out into the country and away from the vitiated atmosphere of town life, would be good for the health and manhood of the nation. It may be, too, that the Swiss system is not in every detail adaptable to the conditions existing in this country. We are not concerned with the Swiss system except in so far as it demonstrates the feasibility of maintaining a thoroughly adequate means of national defence without the cost, the waste, the danger, and the demoralisation of a standing army. So far the Swiss have shown the way by which the greatest degree of efficiency may be secured with the least danger and at the lowest cost. Even if in every detail that system may not be suited to the requirements of this country we should be able to adopt some modification of it which would secure the same result. At present the Swiss are able to put a larger proportion of their male population into the field, and with more expedition, than any other nation in Europe. Her equipment is as good as her men. Nevertheless, Switzerland spends infinitely less on armaments per head of her population than any other Power. While France spends 20.80 francs per head of population on her fighting services, England 19.25, Germany 12.45, Russia 10.25, Italy 8.00, and Austria 7.05, Switzerland maintains her national citizen force at a cost of 4.00 francs per head of her population. On the other hand, Switzerland spends nearly twice as much on education as she does on armaments and has the finest educa-

tional system in Europe, while enlightened England only spends a seventh as much on education as she spends on armaments, France a sixth, Germany a fifth, Austria and Italy a fourth, and Russia a fortieth.

Artillery and cavalry are the two arms of military service which are supposed to present the greatest difficulties for a citizen force. But the Swiss, according to M. Moch, have not found these difficulties insuperable. In reference to the two batteries whose performance we have cited above, he says: "There is no reason to suppose that the Swiss more than anybody else is a born artilleryman. Any other citizen could do the same. These two batteries belonged to the Canton de Vaud, in French Switzerland, and, as an ex-artillery officer, I may say that I could form excellent gunners in eight or ten weeks if I had to deal with healthy men, and if I were allowed to teach them properly." As to cavalry, the Swiss, who are certainly less a nation of horsemen than the English, secure the maintenance of a sufficient cavalry force by the following means: "When the young cavalry soldier goes home after his time he takes his horse with him, after paying the State half the price. For £10 he has an excellent trained horse, four or five years old; he can use him in his business, but he must keep the animal in good condition. This is assured by inspection, and also every time the man is called he must bring his horse. After his first training a cavalry soldier must attend drills ten days a year for ten years. Each year he gets back a tenth of the price he paid for the horse, and at the end he has the horse for nothing. So that, after paying down half the price once, which he gets back, he has, in addition the horse. He is allowed to borrow the money, so that poor men can enter the cavalry. Thus a farmer may buy a horse for his coachman or for one of his labourers."

Recent experience has shown that so far from modern weapons having made cavalry obsolete, that arm has, by reason of its mobility, become more important than ever. But the use of cavalry has almost entirely changed, and it is mainly as a means of locomotion rather than of battle action that horses are needed. For this, on the good roads we have in this country, bicycles might be largely used instead of horses. The use of bicycles would ensure a much larger number of what would be practically mounted infantry than could otherwise be obtained, as a bicycle would not be so great a difficulty for the citizen-soldier in times of peace as a horse, and bicyclists have too the advantage over horsemen, that they would only need to carry their own food; they would need none for their steeds, and along roads they would move more swiftly and untiringly than if they rode horses.

With a national citizen force as with a standing army, there has to be a permanent staff. But this is maintained for service and not for show; all the posts would be filled by promotion

from the ranks, and all officers would gain their posts as the result of competitive examination and by the selection of the general body of their command. Besides the General Staff, whose duties would be those of the General Staff of a permanent standing army, but who would be selected in the most democratic manner, and in accordance with their fitness for those duties, and not because they belong to a ruling or privileged class, there would be also a permanent staff of workmen employed in the arsenals and forts to maintain the arms and material in a state of readiness and efficiency. All these would necessarily have received the training of soldiers, but in no sense would they form a permanent standing army. The whole organisation would be democratic, the army would be the people, and the whole people would control the army, instead of the army being an instrument of despotism in the hands of a privileged few.

Many friends of peace and opponents of militarism strongly condemn all kinds of military training. They are loud in their protests against drilling in the public elementary schools, as they fear that this is calculated to foster a love of fighting, of militarism, and to inculcate a spirit of jingoism. But these mischievous consequences are not necessary results of a military training, and they would be best counteracted if such training were universal and compulsory, and if it were accompanied by a proper education in the rights and duties of citizenship, and by the inculcation of the principles of true patriotism and of international co-operation and inter-dependence. It is not, as a rule, the men who are "commandeered" to fight, but those who volunteer, who are jingoes. It is one thing to train men to the use of arms at the same time that they are educated to regard war as a terrible calamity, never to be resorted to except as a dire necessity in self-defence. It is another and totally different thing to deliberately cultivate the jingo spirit and a love of militarism in order to induce men to volunteer for aggressive warlike enterprises. Except in France (even if France should be excepted) in no country in which military service is compulsory is the jingo spirit so rampant as it is in this country, where we have a voluntary system. Your rabid jingo is, as a rule, not the man who has to fight, willy-nilly, but the creature who is sure of getting his fighting done for him. It was not in the Transvaal, where every man was trained to fight and would be called upon to do so, that angry mobs howled for war, and any man who pleaded for peace did so at the risk of his life. That was in England, where those who howled the loudest scarcely knew the butt end of a rifle from the muzzle, and would have fainted with fright at the discharge of a piece of artillery. All reports go to show that up to the last the Boers hoped, and prayed, and wrought for peace, and when war was forced upon them they left their farms and marched to the front soberly, quietly, regretfully. No howling crowds cheered their departure

in a frenzy of jingoist inebriety, with ribald, bombastic songs of braggart imbecility. No, mere military training will not create jingoes; it is much more likely to reduce their number. It is safe to say that there is an infinitely stronger peace party in every country in which military service is compulsory, than there is in this country, with its voluntary system. Even here the best consequence of the war from the point of view of future peace is the fact that so many men have been drawn from industrial pursuits to be sent to the front. Many people regret this, and its consequent dislocation of social, industrial, and family life; but really the more the evil consequences of war are brought home to the people in their everyday life the more will they desire that it should be avoided. The people of this country have had no practical experience of the horrors of war, therefore they are incapable of appreciating the blessings of peace. This war, however, will in some way or other bring mourning into almost every home in England, and that is much more likely to have a sobering effect on the present jingo madness than if the men who were doing the fighting were absolutely and entirely a class apart. It will be found in the long run that the short service system has done more for the cause of peace in this country than all the preachments of peace societies. And the substitution of a system of universal compulsory military training, incumbent on all classes, with no immunity by paying a fine, would do infinitely more. With a professional soldiery, a standing army, as a class apart, separate, cut off from the rest of the community, with no civil ties, rights, or duties, the bulk of the nation finds only a pleasing diversion in a foreign war. Certainly it has to pay, but then it gets all the glory without any of the risk, and, as it would have to pay the soldiers anyhow, it feels that they might as well be earning their money. With a standing army, therefore, especially a voluntary mercenary army of professional soldiers, war becomes almost a necessity; with the armed nation, on the other hand, trained for and capable of military service, but busy with its industrial, social, and domestic interests, war would be a bugbear and a nuisance. Every man would be liable, and, although there would doubtless be a number of fiery adventurous spirits even in such a community, the majority would certainly be in favour of peace and against war. This is not mere theory; we have the experience of past and but recent events to guide us, and that experience fully and conclusively proves the soundness of the Socialist position on this matter. We have seen that those citizens who, in the event of war, would have to bear the battle's brunt, have been the least eager for war, but have also borne themselves bravely when the duty of taking up arms has been thrust upon them. As in industrial life we frequently find the men who are most eager to strike are also the first to give way, so it has been shown by recent events that those who have shouted loudest for war have not been the best fighters.

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national defence, not with the maintenance of empire. Governments have no right to exist except with the consent of the governed, and the British have no more right to dominate other peoples than other peoples have to dominate us. A national citizen force is hardly likely to serve the schemes or ambitions of a dominant class, but that is only an additional argument in its favour. We certainly do not suggest that there should be any compulsory foreign service. What we can only hold by maintaining an alien garrison had better be given up. The people of these islands would not be the losers but the gainers by such a course. Egypt should have been evacuated long ago, and indeed never ought to have been occupied; in India the organisation of native administration, so well begun, should be carried on until neither difficulty nor danger would attend the withdrawal of the British garrison. As to the British colonies, it would be for them to organise their own military defence on the same lines as this would be organised at home. In cases where they were too weak for self-defence against foreign or neighbouring enemies it would not be difficult to organise bodies of volunteers from the mother country to act as defensive garrisons. That would be a very different matter from maintaining a standing army for foreign service, or for acting as repressive garrisons in any part of the world. Provision might even be made for service in countries outside these islands in case of emergency or when the national defence required it.

It is no part of our province, within the limits of a small pamphlet, to enter into all the details of the organisation of a national citizen force. In the main these details would present even less difficulty than the details of the organisation of a professional standing army. The chief point is that without infringing on his rights or duties as a citizen every citizen should be drilled and trained and armed so as to be able to perform his part in the national defence. A thorough course of physical training should be given in all the schools; as is the case in Switzerland to-day, and, as in that country, in addition to his annual military training, every citizen, soldier or officer, should belong to a rifle club in which a certain standard of efficiency should be maintained by periodical inspection. But to learn to shoot is not everything. A good physical development is essential to a good citizen and to a good soldier; and the use of the spade is as important in the education of the citizen-soldier as the use of the rifle. In every district throughout the country rifle-ranges should be provided, and not only rifle-ranges, but exercise grounds in which the youth of the nation could acquire a thorough physical training and make itself proficient in the use of both spade and rifle. Such training would not only be useful for the national defence, but would be an excellent means of developing the manhood of the nation. What we are concerned with here, however,

is to press forward the principle of the armed nation as against professional standing armies. This is no new thing with us, but in the face of the admitted breakdown of modern professional militarism we have a good opportunity of making our proposals known. This is the principle which Socialists of all countries advocate, for in the armed nation they see the only means of escape from the evils of militarism and the only guarantee of national liberty. At the great International Congress of 1896 the following report by the Commission on War was adopted:—

Under capitalism the chief causes of war are not religious or national differences but economic antagonisms, into which the exploiting classes of the various countries are driven by the system of production for profit.

Just as this system sacrifices unceasingly the life and health of the working class on the battlefield of labour, so it has no scruple in shedding their blood in search of profit by the opening up of new markets.

The working class of all countries should rise up against military oppression on the same ground that they revolt against all other forms of exploitation under which they are victimised by the possessing class.

To attain this object they must acquire political power so as to abolish the system of capitalist production, and simultaneously refuse, in all countries, to Governments which are the instruments of the capitalist class, the means of maintaining the existing order of things.

Standing armies, whose maintenance even in times of peace exhausts the nation, and the cost of which is borne by the working class, increase the danger of war between nations, and at the same time favour the brutal oppression of the proletariat of the world. This is why the cry "Lay down your Arms" is no more listened to than the other appeals to humanitarian sentiments raised by the capitalist classes.

The working class alone have the serious desire, and they alone possess the power, to realise Universal Peace.

They demand:—

1. The Abolition of Standing Armies and the Establishment of a National Citizen Force.

2. The Establishment of Tribunals of Arbitration, to regulate peaceably disputes between nations.

3. The final decision on the question of War or Peace to be vested directly in the People in cases where the Governments refuse to accept the decision of the tribunal of arbitration;

And they protest against the system of secret treaties.

The working class will only attain these objects by securing the control of legislation and by entering into an alliance with the international Socialist movement, whereby peace may be finally assured, and the real fraternity of peoples permanently established.

E. WURM, speaking for the Commission, said: The War Commission, which is really a peace commission, has unanimously agreed to the main points of the report here presented to the Congress. Seven resolutions were handed in to us. Of these six were accepted; one, proposed by two French delegates, we do not see our way to agree to. These French delegates think we should vote in favour of a general strike as a means of getting rid of

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To attain this object they must acquire political power so as to abolish the system of capitalist production, and simultaneously refuse, in all countries, to Governments which are the instruments of the capitalist class, the means of maintaining the existing order of things.

Standing armies, whose maintenance even in times of peace exhausts the nation, and the cost of which is borne by the working class, increase the danger of war between nations, and at the same time favour the brutal oppression of the proletariat of the world. This is why the cry "Lay down your Arms" is no more listened to than the other appeals to humanitarian sentiments raised by the capitalist classes.

The working class alone have the serious desire, and they alone possess the power, to realise Universal Peace.

They demand:—

1. The Abolition of Standing Armies and the Establishment of a National Citizen Force.

2. The Establishment of Tribunals of Arbitration, to regulate peaceably disputes between nations.

3. The final decision on the question of War or Peace to be vested directly in the People in cases where the Governments refuse to accept the decision of the tribunal of arbitration;

And they protest against the system of secret treaties.

The working class will only attain these objects by securing the control of legislation and by entering into an alliance with the international Socialist movement, whereby peace may be finally assured, and the real fraternity of peoples permanently established.

E. WURM, speaking for the Commission, said: The War Commission, which is really a peace commission, has unanimously agreed to the main points of the report here presented to the Congress. Seven resolutions were handed in to us. Of these six were accepted; one, proposed by two French delegates, we do not see our way to agree to. These French delegates think we should vote in favour of a general strike as a means of getting rid of